

March 28, 2000

As his time drew near, posterity sealed, he relented, and thus joined his wife.  
Today we think mainly of First and of Third, on Rushmore and our currency.  
Remember Our Friend, a man of his word, whose heartsleeve was for you and me.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE CAPTAIN  
ANTHONY R. STARNER

**HON. JAMES V. HANSEN**

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2000*

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday marked the second year that United States Marine Corps Captain Anthony R. Starnier, his wife Ann, and their son Michael were tragically killed in an automobile accident on their way to Michael's baptism. Captain Starnier served his country admirably in many places around the world including: Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; Puerto Rico; the Balkans; Estonia; and the United States of America. He was a selfless, well-respected, and caring officer, husband, and father. He and his family are missed by many friends, family members, and loved ones. A flag flew over the Capitol Building yesterday in their honor.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON  
THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2001

SPEECH OF

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 23, 2000*

The House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the concurrent resolution (House Concurrent Resolution 290) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2001, revising the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2000, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for each of fiscal years 2002 through 2005:

Mr. STARK. Mr. Chairman, the Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act of 1978 provides for the members of the Joint Economic Committee to come before the House and present their views on the current state of the U.S. economy, to serve as input in the debate we are about to have on the budget resolution before us. I rise today to report that while there are many economic achievements to celebrate, there is also a lot more to do in order for everyone to share in the current prosperity.

For the first time since the Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act was passed in 1978, the U.S. economy has met the goals which Senator Hubert Humphrey and Congressman Gus Hawkins set out in the original bill: 1. The unemployment rate for individuals over 20 is just 1/2 percentage point above the goal of 3 percent. 2. The unemployment rate for individuals over 16 has met the stated goal of 4 percent. 3. Inflation has remained below the goal of 3 percent since the beginning of

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

the Clinton Administration, 7 years ago. 4. And all of this has been achieved while balancing the federal budget, for the first time in over 40 years.

It is a shame Senator Humphrey and Congressman Hawkins could not witness these achievements.

The great irony is that Senator Humphrey and Congressman Hawkins saw these goals as part of the path toward achieving full employment and balanced economic growth. Today, 20 years later, Alan Greenspan views them as dangerous signs of an overheating economy! I agree with Humphrey and Hawkins—low employment and inflation, and rising wages are always good for an economy.

Currently, unemployment and inflation are low, average wages are rising, and productivity is growing. There is cause to celebrate these achievements, which are due, in large part, to the economic policies of the last 7 years. But the Humphrey-Hawkins bill also called for establishing a national goal to fulfill the RIGHT of all adult Americans who are able, willing and seeking work to find employment at fair compensation. We may have met the numerical targets set out in the bill, we still have a lot to do in order to meet their overarching goal.

Despite the historic economic prosperity we are currently experiencing, the average after-tax income of the wealthiest families continues to grow faster than that for all other Americans, causing the income gap to continue widening. Some of my colleagues like to argue that the tax code should not be used to redistribute income to the poor. Well, I say we should stop using the tax code to redistribute income to the rich, like we have been doing!

Consider the following: Just the richest one percent of Americans—2.7 million people—took home as much after-tax income as the lowest 38 percent—or 100 million people—combined. In 1998, the average income of the wealthiest 20 percent of families was 14 times higher than that of the poorest 20 percent. After adjusting for taxes, the top 20 percent of U.S. households experienced a 43 percent increase in average income from 1977 to 1999, while the average income of the lowest 20 percent experienced a 9 percent decline. In 1999, almost 13 percent of total national after-tax income was concentrated in the top one percent of Americans. As a result of changes in the tax code since 1977, the richest one percent of households, on average, are expected to pay \$40,000 less this year in taxes than they would have paid under the 1977 tax rates.

The foundations for this disparity were laid during the 1980s, when average after-tax income for the wealthiest fifth of households increased by 33 percent.

The Republican budget does nothing to narrow the growing gap between the rich and the poor, and in fact would actually make it worse. Tax breaks for multi-millionaires do not help the millions of average Americans or narrow the gap between the rich and the poor.

In addition, the Republican budget would jeopardize the economic prosperity we are currently enjoying.

In 1992, President Clinton inherited budget deficits for "as far as the eye could see." In contrast to his predecessors, President Clinton

and the Democrats in Congress implemented policies which eliminated the budget deficit. And contrary to what the critics predicted, we balanced the budget while experiencing the longest period of prosperity in U.S. history.

The Republican budget would put all of this in jeopardy. The Republican budget calls for large tax cuts, increases in defense spending, and drastic reductions to non-defense discretionary spending. Where have we heard this before? This precise mix of policies brought us the record budget deficits of the 1980s, which contributed to a decline in living standards for the vast majority of Americans.

My colleagues claim that their budget fixes Social Security and Medicare, creates a prescription drug insurance program, and does all this while keeping the budget in surplus. Well, this sounds like *de ja vu* all over again. To paraphrase this month's testimony of Nobel Laureate Robert Solow before the Joint Economic Committee—if you believe that their budget will do all that, I must be Alice and this must be wonderland.

The Reagan supply-side policies were a complete failure. While a few got rich, the vast majority of American workers and their families suffered as the country was saddled with an enormous debt, which those working families are still paying off.

The nation made the mistake of buying that snake oil once, why should we do it again? I am not about to put the incomes of American families at risk once again, especially as they are just beginning to recover from the last Republican attempt to "save" the economy.

The Republican budget includes a "Bush-lite" tax cut. I must at least give my colleagues some credit for rejecting the full Bush tax cut proposal completely. Their tax cut would only go half as far—which is still way too much. The Republican's current tax cut proposals cost more than the bloated tax cut proposal from last year, which the American people clearly rejected.

There are two fundamental things wrong with their tax proposals. First, they benefit the rich and don't help the vast majority of Americans. Second, these tax cuts, together with the rest of the budget package, are certain to get us back into the mess we were in during the 1980s, which caused real economic hardship on workers and their families.

The Republican budget calls for increasing defense spending by \$17½ billion above the caps, which is even more than the Administration's request. According to the Children's Defense Fund, just this additional spending alone would be enough to: Provide Head Start to 1.7 million additional children; and Provide child care to more than 8 million additional children; and Provide 21st Century After-School programs for close to 35 million additional children.

Just think what we could do for our children if we were willing to forgo just one new major weapon system. In addition to being a budget-buster, excessive defense spending forces us to shift our priorities away from feeding, clothing and educating our children and caring for the sick, the elderly and the poor.

The Republican budget has a solution to this problem—cut non-defense discretionary spending by 6 percent or \$114 billion over 5 years. Where is this money going to come

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